



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Female fugitive is jailed in Colby

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

One of the two people who escaped capture during a high-speed chase in Thomas County last August is back in jail here and facing multiple charges for her part in aggravated burglary and assault, kidnapping and felony theft.

Tina Janice Pearce, 23, had her first appearance in the District Court of Thomas County last Monday for the purpose of establishing bond and appointing an attorney in her defense.

District Magistrate Judge Rick Ress appointed Scott Showalter, Goodland, to represent Pearce and additionally ordered that the defendant appear again on Thursday, Nov. 29, at 10 a.m., to consider terms of release if she can meet a \$100,000 bond.

Since the first appearance, Showalter has filed paperwork asking for a bond reduction hearing on Tuesday at 10 a.m., but until then Pearce remains in custody at the Thomas County Jail.

After months of eluding authorities across many states, Pearce and her companion, Kristopher Aaron Lambert, 21, were finally captured in Angelton, Texas on Oct. 8, when a domestic disturbance at a motel led authorities to their room. Pearce surrendered without incident, according to police in Angelton, and Lambert was caught later that day after attempts to avoid capture failed.

At first, Pearce refused extradition to Kansas, signing waivers instead to Mississippi on charges of accessory to auto theft, said C.D. Hopper, investigator with the Thomas County Sheriff's office.

However, earlier this month, she signed extradition papers for Kansas. "The reason she signed the waiver and returned to Kansas," Hopper said, "was because she and her family said

they want to get this over with, since the more serious charges are here."

The couple's alleged crime spree started long before they reached Kansas, Hopper said, dating as far back as one year ago.

Apparently, the auto theft charges last November in Mississippi were only the beginning of an alleged series of crimes that took the couple from Mississippi to Pennsylvania, along with Florida, Washington, Wisconsin, Kansas, Utah and Texas.

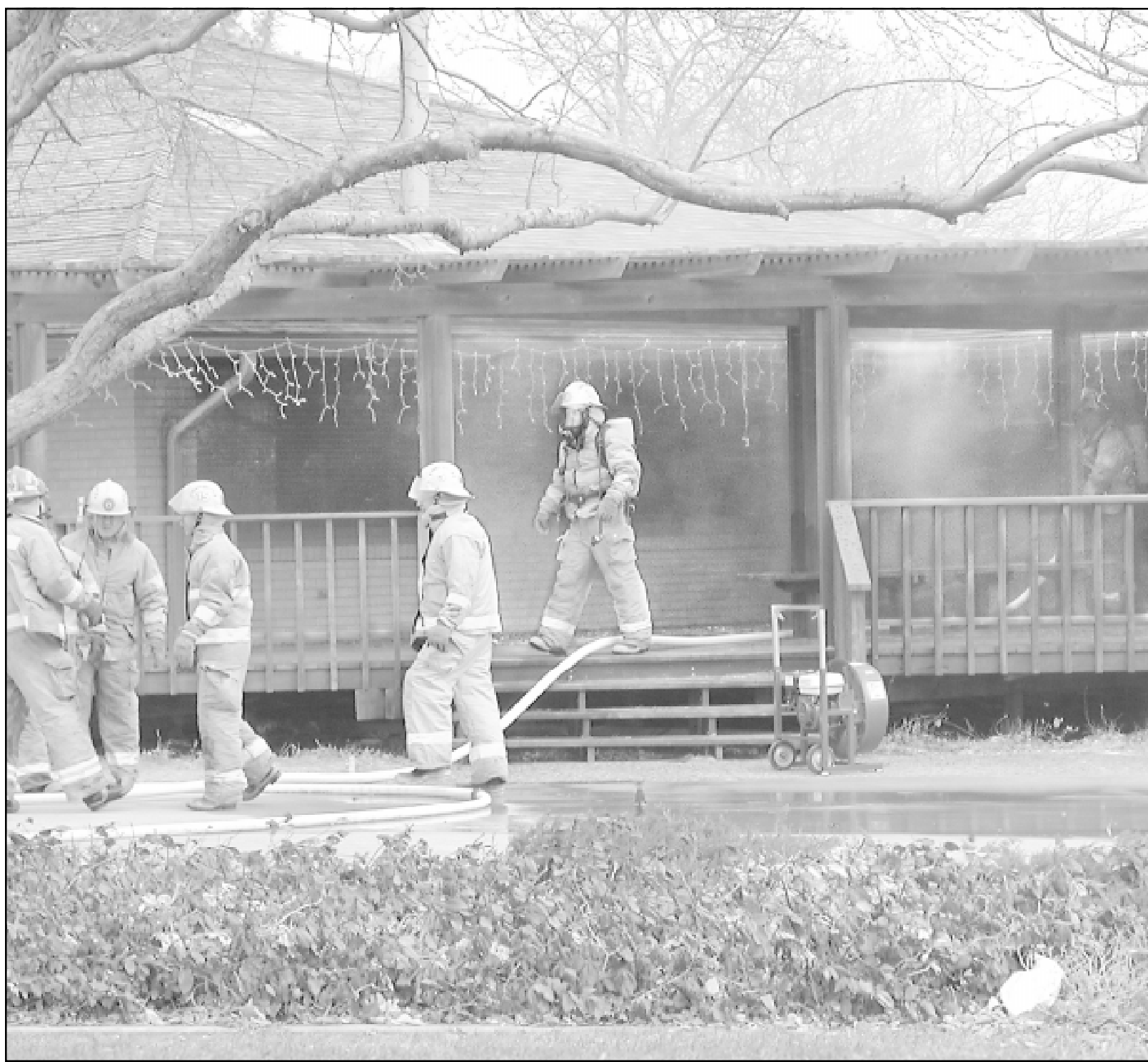
Authorities in Thomas County were brought into the couple's alleged crime spree path on Aug. 8, after they were informed that a pickup, stolen from Wausau, Wis. on Aug. 5, had been involved in a gas skip out of Grinnell earlier that day.

Thomas County authorities spotted the vehicle later on I-70 and started a chase which ended when Lambert and Pearce drove off the highway, through a fence and into a cornfield. They then accosted a teen-ager at knifepoint, stole her vehicle and later stole another vehicle, a white Jeep Cherokee, in Hoxie. Even though at that time the couple was still on the loose, Hopper said a criminal complaint was filed in Thomas County on Aug. 30.

Lambert is still in Texas facing similar charges of aggravated assault and burglary after fleeing on foot from the motel. Authorities in Texas said that Lambert was eventually taken into custody after being hit by a 20-year Air Force veteran with a 12-inch wire brush used for cleaning his barbecue grill.

The Texas citizen, Rudy Karen, 59, according to Angelton police, beat the 21-year-old with the brush as he tried to escape capture. Within minutes, authorities arrested Lambert as he tried to get away from Karen by breaking in the door of a nearby house.

## Firemen summoned



EVAN BARNUM/Colby Free Press

Colby firefighters were called to a house fire at 985 S. Range that was first called in as a garage fire. The blaze started just before noon to-

day and, as of presstime, no details were available. Pictured are firefighters running hose into the kitchen area.

## U.S. Marine landing signals new phase of fighting in Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Quickening the hunt for Osama bin Laden and top Taliban leaders, U.S. Marines landed today outside the southern stronghold of Kandahar and set up a desert airbase. Heavy U.S. bombardment backed up anti-Taliban tribal fighters advancing on the city.

The deployment of Marines near Kandahar marks a perilous new phase of a conflict that until now had focused on U.S. airstrikes backing up the opposition northern alliance.

Ferried in by helicopter, the vanguard of Marines seized a secret desert airstrip within striking distance of Kandahar, their commander said. He said more than 1,000 of them would be on the ground within 48 hours.

"The Marines have landed and we now own a piece of Afghanistan," Gen. James Mattis, commander of the attack task force, said from aboard the assault ship USS Peleliu. After securing the sand airfield, troops set up landing lights so fixed-wing transport aircraft

could land with more troops and supplies, he said.

In newly captured Kunduz, wary northern alliance troops were going house-to-house to flush out Taliban stragglers, triggering an occasional firefight. The city, the Taliban's last northern garrison, fell to the alliance a day earlier, after a two-week siege.

At the scene of a bloody prison uprising in Mazar-e-Sharif by captured fighters loyal to bin Laden, heavy new explosions and gunfire rang out for a

second day despite official assurances that the insurrection had been quelled. Holdouts barricaded themselves inside a tower and fired rocket-propelled grenades, witnesses said.

Kandahar has come under fierce bombardment since the U.S.-led military campaign began Oct. 7, and the Taliban have vowed to fight to the death rather than abandon their last citadel. In the last three weeks, the Taliban have lost their grip on three-quarters of Afghanistan, plus the capi-

tal, Kabul.

Explosions rocked the area around Kandahar overnight and early today, with bright flares illuminating the night sky, a witness in the city said. Tribal leaders said their fighters, backed by U.S. bombardment, had pushed to within five miles of the city.

Pakistani journalist Nasir Malik, who is in Kandahar, said the center of the city was quiet today, with truckloads of armed Taliban soldiers driving through the streets. He said the

Taliban appeared to be in control of the city airport too.

Malik said there was no sign of local Taliban officials in their offices. Most of the top Taliban leadership is believed to be holed up in and around Kandahar, including their supreme leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar. The foreign minister of the northern alliance said he believed Omar and bin Laden were close together, but did not disclose his reasons for thinking so.

## Cloning issues coming under attack

BOSTON (AP) — A research company's claim that it has cloned the first human embryo has drawn swift opposition from religious and political leaders, who see it as a step toward cloning human beings.

The researchers at Advanced Cell Technology in Worcester, Mass., say they hope to develop genetically compatible replacement cells for patients with a range of illnesses — not human clones. The Worcester company announced its findings Sunday online in the journal *e-biomed: The Journal of Regenerative Medicine*. The research was also described online in *Scientific*

American. "This work sets the stage for human therapeutic cloning as a potentially limitless source of immune-compatible cells for tissue engineering and transplantation medicine," said Dr. Robert P. Lanza, one of the researchers at the biotechnology company.

Several states, including California, have banned human cloning, and Congress is considering such a ban. But company officials insisted their work is the first step in providing hope for people with spinal injuries, heart disease and other ailments.

Lanza and the company's top executive Michael West said they had no in-

terest in transplanting such early embryos into a woman's womb to give birth to a cloned human being, nor was it clear that their embryo would be capable of that. But critics of cloning, including the Washington D.C.-based National Right to Life Committee, wasted little time Sunday attacking the announcement. "This corporation is creating human embryos for the sole purpose of killing them and harvesting their cells," said the group's legislative director, Douglas Johnson. "Unless Congress acts quickly, this corporation and others will be opening human embryo farms."

## Weather people predict early winter

LAWRENCE (AP) — Although winter officially begins at 1:21 a.m. Dec. 21, forecasters say winter weather may hit the state much sooner — possibly within 10 days.

The good news is that suppliers of natural and propane gas say they have plentiful supplies this year and consumers should not suffer the high prices they faced last winter.

A front moving into Kansas from the northwest should drop temperatures into the mid-20s early Tuesday and Wednesday, said Mike Akulow, meteorologist with the National

Weather Service in Topeka. High temperatures are expected to be in the low to mid-40s.

"If this pattern persists, then I think we could see our first snow in 10 days," Akulow said.

It's difficult to predict what to expect for the entire winter, Akulow said.

"It will be colder than normal in the central plains down to southern Iowa," he said. "That cold air could sink just a little bit farther."

Temperatures through much of November have been from 10 to 15 degrees above normal, the weather ser-

vice said, and that has helped the nation's supply of propane and natural gas remain well-stocked.

"We don't expect the big price spikes of last year," said Justin Holstin, executive vice president of the Propane Marketers Association of Kansas.

Conroy, the nation's second largest propane gas storage facility, currently stores 27 million barrels, Holstin said. Nationally, the total is 70.6 million barrels in storage, which is higher than last year, he said.

## Briefly

### Weather: Just plain cold

Hope your house and car are ready because the Colby region is in for some pretty cold stuff through Thursday at least. In fact, single digits appear in the forecast. Tonight, partly cloudy, lows in the lower teens and north winds 5-15 mph. Tuesday, partly sunny and cold, highs only in the middle 20s and northwest winds 10-15 mph. Tuesday night, partly cloudy and very cold, with lows only around 6 degrees above zero. Wednesday, partly sunny and continued cold with the high near 30. Thursday, cloudy, lows in the lower teens and highs in the middle 30s. Colby's high Sunday was 48 and the low this morning was 25. Precipitation stands at 0.98 inches for the month to date, thanks to 0.83 inches of rain last Friday. The soil temperature at the four-inch depth is averaging 40 degrees. The records for Nov. 26: 77 in 1960 and -3 in 1975. (The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

### Accident reported on U.S. 83

OAKLEY — A 61-year-old Garden City man was taken

to Citizens Medical Center in Colby with chest pains after a one-vehicle accident on U.S. 83, 10 miles north of Oakley early this morning. The Kansas Highway Patrol said Marlin J. Jones was northbound when his 2001 Dodge pickup spun out of control and went into the west ditch. The pickup struck a culvert marking post, rolling once and coming to rest on its wheels facing southeast.

The trooper on the scene requested a Thomas County ambulance when Jones began suffering chest pains. Hospital spokesman Michael Boyles said Jones was treated and released.

### Parade entries still sought

The Colby Christmas parade will be held Sunday, Dec. 9 at 6 p.m. The Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce, the sponsoring organization, said cash prizes will be given in five divisions including religious groups, clubs and organizational floats, best lighted vehicle, child displaying best Christmas Spirit, and best lighted float. Line-up will be at 2nd and Franklin at 5:30 and then proceed at 6 to Santa City where Santa will be in attendance. The Chamber is still looking for entries and encourages anyone with

even a hint of participating to call the office to register your entry.

### CPR, first aid classes Tuesday

The American Red Cross will be sponsoring a CPR and First Aid class on Tuesday and Thursday at the Thomas County Emergency Medical Services building, 1245 S. Franklin Ave. To register or for information, call Finley at 462-7161 or 462-2366.

### Wellness Fair wants merchants

With the annual Wellness Fair nearing, businesses are being asked to take part in promoting community health and wellness by covering the cost of the fair registration and or health screenings for their employees who may want to participate. The fair will be held on Saturday, Jan. 26, 2002, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the student union on the Colby Community College campus, and some of the testing will be done prior to the fair, said Pat Erickson, one of the organizers. The registration fee is \$5 with additional fees for some testing to include blood chemistry, anemia at \$12 and/

or prostate screening and PSA testing at \$18. Blood work will be done on Saturday, Jan. 5 and Saturday, Jan. 12 from 6 to 10 a.m. at Citizens Medical center. For information or to obtain coupons for employees, call Erickson at (785) 462-3984, ext. 327.

### Chamber selling cut trees

The Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce promotion committee is in the process of selling fresh cut Christmas Trees. They are available in the Thomas County Complex parking lot.

### College auditions set

The drama department at Colby Community College will conduct auditions for the spring production, *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*, (revised edition) on Nov. 27-28. The auditions will be held in the Frahm Theater on campus each evening at 7 p.m.

Those interested are asked to bring a musical audition piece and be prepared to sing. Call 462-4783 for more information.

